

Traffic Advisory Committee Public Hearing--Minutes for Tuesday, July 19, 2005.

In attendance: M.J. Frisoli, L. Nickens, A. Masciari, T. Turner.

Absent: T. Riley, P. Curro, T. Olson.

Also attending: G. Clancy, Sgt. Hamilton, BSC Group representatives C Kalauskas, P. Brier, Marybeth Murphy. Approximately 35 residents.

7:05 p.m. Meeting called to order

(7:05 p.m.) Minutes from June 2 and July 7 were discussed. AM moved the minutes (LN 2nd). Minutes were approved 4-0.

(7:06 p.m.) MF gave the assembly a brief introduction into the process for the Belmont Street/Trapelo Road Corridor (BTC) leading up to the town's application to the Transit Improvement Program (TIP) administered by Mass Highway, explaining that tonight's meeting will focus on the concerns of Belmont's business community. CK of the BSC Group amplified her introduction by outlining the timetable for the process. PB explained the considerations to be taken into account in designing the road way in terms of lane widths, bicycle accommodations, parking, and sidewalks. Several questions were raised *regarding "bicycle accommodations" and the configuration of the remaining lanes*. PB stated that MassHighway would require a waiver to eliminate bicycle accommodations only at intersections, but such a waiver is unprecedented. Another resident inquired about the *transitions at either end of the corridor, at the town lines with Cambridge and Waltham*. PB admitted that these areas are concerns, and may require further study. More questions were raised on obtaining waivers, but PB felt that such a request would delay or decrease the probability of approval. *Could bicycle accommodations be "diverted" in order to keep travel lanes and parking at locations like Cushing Square?* CK stated that MassHighway mandates that bicycle accommodations be maintained throughout the corridor. *Could the town provide off-street parking to compensate for loss of parking in the squares?* MF explained that is not in the TAC's charge.

PB went on to highlight the intersection design, using Cushing Square (Trapelo Rd./Common St./Cushung Ave.) as an example. By altering the lane configurations and signal phases, the models suggest that the level of service would remain similar while allowing for bicycle accommodations and parking. New keyword – "waiver", based on the "unique" character of the corridor. Much discussion ensued regarding general business concerns such as loading zones, level of service, bicycle lanes versus four travel lanes at signalized intersections, additional parking, "reverse-angle" parking, etc.

MM highlighted the aesthetic elements of the BTC design process. As an example, she showed some photos of Waverley Square, Central/Palfrey Squares, Cushing Square, and East Belmont District (near Grove/Arlington Sts.) to illustrate some of the challenges to streetscape design. Numerous examples of landscaping, street furniture, and other design features were presented. A general discussion ensued covering buried utilities, and exactly what elements of the construction costs would be covered under the MassHighway funds. CK explained that most construction costs would be paid by MH, but some of the aesthetics would not. GC stated that buried utilities will be encouraged, but costs prohibit complete burial.

PB finished the presentation by outlining a proposed intersection design of Trapelo Rd./Lexington St. Numerous comments were made regarding lane configurations as it is currently used versus the design schemes presented.

Meeting Adjourned 9:40 p.m.